

## School description:

[Castle Bromwich Infant and Nursery School](#) is a 4 form entry school with 90 nursery places (50 full time, 45 part time in All Stars setting). Children get off to a strong start in the early years {Ofsted report 2022}. In both nursery and reception, the staff work closely with parents to support self-care. There are no additional staff at the start of the year but everyone helps children to be as independent as they can. This includes some of the following.....

## Things we did to support...

<p>Before children started Reception (YR)</p>	<p>Talked to parents about a child's needs and their worries encourage an open-door policy and be approachable for parents to share any concerns.</p> <p>Develop a relationship to find out how will a teacher know their child needs the toilet [there is a 1:30 ratio so it will be hard to read subtle indicators}. Parents can look at things from their child's perspective on an open evening and tour and alert us to worries while within school. We share the need to be toilet trained during our welcome meeting and what we do to support this; offering support via Dojo in the six weeks break was necessary.</p> <p>We have also shared photos/ video of the environment and some guidance to support children with toilet anxiety. The school promote the ERIC website for additional support ideas such as for toilet avoiders, as this is a common issue in our cohorts. The parents come to introduction sessions and the school nurse is invited to these 'meet-and-greet' sessions.</p> <p>We encouraged parents to take their child to public toilets if they haven't had this experience previously so they can experience the smells, sounds and identify anxiety area. Sometimes we have to turn off hand dryers completely as some children refuse to enter the toilet at all due to fear of the noise from them.</p> <p>We have ensured children could visit toilets with parents at open sessions and taster sessions as this further encourages independence. We have also offered some parents resources such as books and reward charts to support toilet training.</p> <p>We regularly shared websites with useful hints and tips via Dojo in Nursery such as - toilet inserts which may help, backward chaining (break the task into small steps and teach the last step first, working backwards from the goal... initially you support all the steps except the last one which the child practices themselves. Then the child completes last 2 steps independently etc. Successful final steps backchain to success in the whole task).</p> <p>We have had children with specific needs who would only use a potty which played a song when used, another child had a specific toilet which they would use throughout the year, we try to be supportive and flexible with this. The team tried to make the toilet as attractive as possible for some children putting characters on the doors.</p> <p>We are flexible with uniform and talk to parents about clothing for easy toilet use for example some children wear leggings or jogging bottoms rather than school trousers/skirts.</p> <p>We try to help parents understand the ratio and why it is important for children to be independent, when placing children in classes we also consider the toilet location. We have offered a toilet training work-shop. The up take with parents of younger children was good but not those of older children needing support.</p>
<p>During the school day</p>	<p>We try to support independent toilet use – support free-flow use at first. Staff can then see who visits the toilet to use it and who enjoys water play in the sinks, for example. Provide opportunities for in class fascinations to support toilet visits to use the toilet.</p>

	<p>It is helpful to have extra staff when children started YR to support this, but it is rarely the case that extra support is available.</p> <p>We found a variety of ways to encourage toilet notification – request through PECS, Makaton to go, or a card, verbal, non-verbal (some children would rock to show need) etc. We would target some children to go when it is quieter and less busy this will be more helpful than expecting everyone to visit en-mass.</p> <p>What do you label these visits? Toilet? Loo? Rest room? Bathroom?</p> <p>We try to support challenging sensory <u>concerns</u> such as preventing ‘splash-back’, strong perfume spray, hand driers, bright lights.</p> <p>We support toilet use through reminders and rewarding with smiles and praise or stickers depending on the child. When working with toilet training some children would need a reminder to go every 15 to 20 minutes.</p> <p>To support avoiders and getting ready for using the toilet we have used puppets, stories, songs etc to reinforce toilet use, acting out supports hand-eye coordination and sequencing.</p> <p>We try to never make a fuss with accidents but ensure there is a private and stocked change area so the child’s accident isn’t highlighted [eg by wearing non-uniform clothing].</p> <p>We continue to encourage regular drinking as some children who were avoiding the toilet noticed the link between drinking and then would refuse to drink so they didn’t have to use the toilet at school.</p>
Longer term	<p>Continue to involve parents in reflecting on ongoing needs. This may lead to medical investigation if concerns continue and has done in some specific cases. One child was unable to move from pull ups and became reluctant to share the need to be changed, due to embarrassment that she still used these, and her peers did not. Through sensitive work with the parents, they came onboard and then supported toilet training. Strategies such as a card quietly given to a teacher, meant attention was not drawn to her difference.</p>

Staff confirm this was not easy. By the summer term the majority children are usually dry. As children are larger, changes are usually standing up. It is about working together to find what works best for a child. In such a large school the staff need to work with parents to understand the need to have a consistent expectation and approach to moving to self-care...and to ‘Reach for the Stars’

Thanks to Castle Bromwich Infant and Nursery staff for sharing their experience.